

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 148 761

SP 011 979

AUTHOR Razor, Jack E.
TITLE Professional Preparation--Commitment and Change.
PUB DATE Sep 77
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at Midwest District, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Professional Preparation Conference (Angola, Indiana, September 26-28, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Choice; Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; Educational Legislation; *Educational Quality; Graduate Students; *Higher Education; Inservice Teacher Education; *Physical Education; Teacher Certification; *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

This paper covers the following topics: (1) the status of education, in general, in the public schools, and in higher education; (2) quality considerations in teacher education; (3) the rapidly emerging struggle for the control of the teaching market via certification by national associations, state agencies, colleges and universities, teacher organizations, and local public school systems; (4) graduate and inservice education; (5) alternative careers for the physical education major; and (6) changes in academe. In conclusion, recommendations are offered for consideration in each of the topics discussed. (JD)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO-
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGIN-
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT
OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION-COMMITMENT AND CHANGE

Jack E. Razor

Dean

College of Applied Science and Technology

Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois 61761

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jack E. Razor

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
THE ERIC SYSTEM CONTRACTOR

Due to the broad spectrum of topics to be discussed at this conference, the heterogeneity of the professionals participating and making presentations, and our commitment to make this a fast-paced and interesting meeting, may I briefly indicate the areas I will comment upon. Time, and perhaps competence, prohibit elaboration but I do feel it is important at the outset that we are sensitive to: 1) the status of education, in general, in the public schools, and in higher education; 2) quality considerations in teacher education, 3) the rapidly emerging struggle for the control of the teaching market via certification by national associations, state agencies, college and universities, teacher organizations, and more recently, and from a position of power, local public school systems; 4) graduate and inservice education; 5) alternative careers; 6) change in academe, and 7) finally, I feel that it is my responsibility, in addition to raising our consciousness and sensitivity in certain areas, to provide recommendations for consideration, discussion, and action. The review of literature in the areas to be mentioned yielded substantive data and enough material for several separate papers on each topic. However, with the purpose to introduce, explore, and heighten awareness, the following observations appear appropriate:

(1) Status of Education, in General, in the Public Schools, and in Higher Education. Education as an institution is similar in many ways to other institutions and perhaps a microcosm of today's society. Education, as with business, industry, and government, is in a period of transition and perhaps

dislocation marked by dissonance and conflict in establishing priorities. There is very little today in education which is either tranquil or predictable. Education is shadowed by uncertainty, questioned by a demanding and sometimes downright defiant public, and at this point in time crisis-oriented.¹ In the public school sector problems of rising costs, reduced funding, court intervention and physical force have come to the fore. We have a consuming public which is reluctant to pass bond issues; school administrators who must deal with federal and state judges, the ACLU, court referees, state legislatures and governmental bureaucracy (it is getting so complex that one school system actually hired a Philadelphia lawyer, with appropriate certification, to become superintendent of schools); teachers and school boards which are in litigation and filing suits against each other; and we have some students who are neither capable nor interested in achieving the academic expectations of a decade ago of what a high school senior should know.² The United States Office of Education estimates that there are 23 million American adults who are unable to perform basic coping skills such as reading a train schedule and getting on the appropriate train.³ Exemplary of some of the problems facing the public schools is a suit filed by Edward Donohue for five million dollars against the Copiague Union Free Schools in New York charging educational malpractice. The suit comes at a time when:

More than two dozen states either have adopted, or are adopting, "minimum competency" requirements for high school graduation. This fall New York State will begin giving a new test of applied math and reading skills to the class of 1979, which is the first to be affected by its new competency law.⁴

In essence there is a crisis confidence among the general public, school boards, faculty and students about the capacity of education to perform its intended function--which changes annually and invariably becomes broader in scope.

In higher education there has been a basic erosion of affection for and interest in some forms of education. Unrealistic as well as inappropriate accountability models have been imposed upon universities' operation and governance structures. It seems the ethical neutrality of science is being compromised by the practical considerations of economics.⁵

Higher education today is being questioned by a more practical society, a society that questions the earlier promises of a better world through more and more production. They tend to want immediacy of results, production in the same ratio as effort. There is a growing demand for college education to "pay off," if not in money, then a challenging job; if not in a job, then a moral and sensible society; if not a better world, then an acknowledgement that education may not be able to fulfill the needs and wishes of all segments of our society. What some have received are no jobs, or ones for which they are overly prepared at less money than one who didn't go to college, Watergate (and now Koreagate), and a world that has no less than five minor "wars" going on, according to recent CBS news specials.⁶

But let us not be too critical, for while some have developed a nostalgia for Paradise Lost, many are eagerly anticipating the future. This educational system of ours has put people on the moon, brought us from the industrial revolution to the space age, and in terms of serving people, we've come from the Aristocratic phase through the Meritocratic period, into the Egalitarian era.⁷ And despite the fact that much remains to be done in the area of basic skills, including movement, more people, actually and percentagewise, read and write than ever before. In the recent meeting of the American Association of the Advancement of Science⁸ centered on the theme, "Science and Change: Hopes and Dilemmas," scientists reported not only the achievements they had

accomplished, but, as we in physical education must do, discussed the status of their fields, the problems confronting research in view of reduced funding and increased bureaucracy, and the changes necessitated in their structures and operation if they are to remain viable and productive. So while we have problems of both a quantity and quality nature, we must recognize that we have been successful in the past and with dedication, insight, and optimism, we will be so in the future.

(2) Quality of Teacher Education. The configuration of schools, colleges, and departments of physical education in this country is complex and diverse. Very little that can be said about their organizational structure cannot be refuted by noting several exceptions. Issues relating to physical education are not clean, and proposed solutions to problems confronting them are not simple.

In contrast with the centralization of sites for professional training in other fields such as nursing, engineering, law, medicine, the allied health professions, state-approved preservice teacher preparation programs exist in 1,367 four-year institutions of higher education in this country--nearly three out of every four colleges and universities. The model institution, by an overwhelming margin, is the private, baccalaureate-level school with a total institutional enrollment of just over 900 students. The model school has from one to five full-time equivalent education faculty; it graduates 60-70 teacher education students per year. For each of the research center doctoral institutions, there are over 16 operating teacher education programs in private baccalaureate-level colleges.⁹

The quality range among these sites is incredible for a professional training program. Nearly 100 of the institutions of higher education that

maintain state-approved teacher education programs are too weak to obtain regional accreditation for the institution as a whole.

The differences between institutions are not simply of degree but of type. It is no longer sensible to think about departments of physical education as if they were a homogeneous population. They never were, they are not now, and they will not be in the foreseeable future. Suffice to say some institutions and departments are providing quality, contemporary instruction to bright, "screened" students, with a diversity of specialized and singularly committed faculty, while others have none of the aforementioned characteristics and ingredients.¹⁰ I want to be quick to point out that quality is not a function of size as we could all identify schools and departments at both ends of the enrollment continuum where there is no real sense of commitment and quality to their professional preparation programs. Thus, not only must there be some internal screening, there is some need by those of us in the profession, if not accrediting bodies and state certification agencies, to screen institutions providing weak majors and even weaker, watered-down, minors.

(3) Control of Teacher Education and Certification. The preparation and certification of teachers of physical education are chaotic. Not only are there great differences in the quality of education provided, there are significant differences, especially in physical education, in what is required for certification from one state to another, from West Virginia to Michigan, to Illinois, if you will. The colleges prepare, the state agency certifies, but the schools must employ and utilize. Gress noted:

. . . 'few organizations could survive, to say nothing of perform, with the bizarre disjunction between assigned functions, authority, and responsibilities which exist' in teacher education.¹¹

The influence of educational organization on the performance of educational functions is poorly understood and little appreciated, but it is known that many groups have a primary interest in teacher education governance --for example, deans of colleges of education, department chairpersons, faculty members, supervisors of student teaching, and nearly two million schoolteachers who are interested in the preparation of future colleagues and successors.¹²

(4) Graduate and Continuing Education--An Extension of Professional Preparation. Continuing education for professionals, a minor part of the programs of college and university extension divisions a few years ago, is dominating their curricula today.

State legislatures, responding to public demands for doctors, lawyers, and other professional people who are certified as competent, are requiring continuing education as a precondition to relicensing practitioners in an increasing number of professions.

The professional associations, which have been under attack in the past for failing to keep their numbers up-to-date, are solidly behind professional education.

Mandatory continuing education is designed to keep professionals abreast of new knowledge in their fields by requiring them to take a certain amount of education to qualify for periodic relicensing. Most states require relicensing every three to five years.¹³

And what of relicensure or recertification of teachers and in particular, physical education teachers? How many physical education teachers are currently in the field and have not had any professional upgrading in terms of structured formal physical educational experience? Many take courses in educational administration or any field because of convenience rather than felt

need. We need to exercise greater care in the selection of prospective teachers and having done so, we need, especially in physical education, to systematically provide for their continuing education. Wouldn't it be nice if we too could require relicensure every five years, with the option of denial? In our college we have certification and relicensure as required by the AMA for Medical Records Administration and Medical Technology, and believe me, these faculty are the most current of our faculty with regard to advances and developments in their respective fields.

(5) Alternative Careers. Just a few comments about alternative careers as we have an interesting session on the topic. Let us be cautious in looking upon this as a bonanza for future growth in professional preparation programs and employment opportunities for graduates. This is an area that will need to be explored and cultivated. I suggest that we in teacher education are not prepared to let sports writers coach our youngsters and athletic teams, journalists teach physical education, more sporting goods salesmen with marketing majors be athletic trainers. We must not expect immediate acceptance of our majors by those fields. In fact, the fluency with which some of our majors write and speak would not augur well for their success in these fields. Besides, those fields are also burgeoning with would-be journalists for the Chicago Tribune and Sports Illustrated, and sportscasters for NBC and ABC. There is no question as to our potential in assisting people in these areas. But a vast majority of us has neither the technical expertise nor experience to warrant making employment claims for future graduates. The other point I would like to make in this area is for us to be sure we do not become academic charlatans by posing as something we are not, jumping at first this and then that in order to insure enrollment and faculty lines. While it is appropriate

to pursue different programs and be on the cutting edge of our field, let us not abandon and forsake what we know and do well in the clamor for students and "something to do."

(6) Change in Academe. Change is one of the outcomes to be anticipated from our professional meetings. Change in many sectors of our capitalistic society is accomplished efficiently and effectively. In education, it is cumbersome, painful, and above all, slow. An exception may be where funding is involved. When monies are withdrawn or are not forthcoming, changes can occur quickly although not always for the better. Achieving consensus for change in higher education, for example, via democratic participation with a collection of Ph.D.'s whose special training and interests preclude objectivity is a difficult task, or as my boss says, a real opportunity to demonstrate leadership. I recognize that change in academe should be based on deliberation of educational goals and objectives, social needs, and the abilities and aspirations of both students and faculty;¹⁴ my observation, however, is that the political power of a few, institutional prestige, faculty and administrative interests, and compromising expediency to resolve conflict are more effective change agents. Faculty in academic senates, curriculum committees, citizen school board members, invariably want to know how extensively a particular practice is in evidence as a basis for judging whether it is respectable and they'll let you do it.

Bringing about change where there is wide fluctuation in enrollment patterns at both the public school level and in higher education, where costs are rising and revenues are declining (and we have very little to say about either), where traditional values are changing, and there is great range in quality, is indeed complex. Let us not confuse innovation with fad, substitute

conjecture for knowledge, more react impulsively rather than respond with reason.

If change will occur as a result of this conference, it will be necessary for us to limit our alternatives or areas of concern; identify and clarify the situation as it is, and what we would like it to be after the change; involve authority and power, avoid talking to just each other and getting reinforcement from friends; and take the steps necessary for change which include planning and action.¹⁵

(7) Recommendations. In terms of general recommendations, the following are provided for thought and discussion:

Recommendation 1. There is a need for a broad, interacting base in each state to assume responsibility for critical decisions related to teacher education. Recruitment, preparation, certification, and later professional development of teachers should be the responsibility of a consortium. Such a consortium would include in its membership representatives of postsecondary institutions, the public schools, teacher organizations and, in an advisory capacity, representatives of school boards, state licensing agencies, and the general public.¹⁶

Recommendation 2. Certification should be delayed until the teacher has demonstrated professional competence. It is suggested that certification not be granted for the professional lifetime of a teacher but be subject to renewal based on the continued professional growth as a teacher. Licensure or certification for extended periods of time, rather than a lifetime, would contribute greatly to the quality of the people now calling physical education their profession.¹⁷

Recommendation 3. There is a tendency for university faculty members to lecture about innovative and successful teaching methods, but not to use them

themselves. Beginning teachers are left with the dilemma of applying methods that they have only heard about rather than seen in practice. The involvement of competent practicing teachers in teacher preparation programs is at least a partial solution to the problem.¹⁸

More specifically and related directly to physical education the following recommendations are offered:

Recommendation 4. We must attempt to control the entry and egress in our professional preparation programs. Quality should receive a higher priority than quantity. We need not educate everyone who comes to college and say they want to be a physical educator. We seem to have an obsession with trying to educate everyone who shows some interest and aptitude. Medicine and law control entry, even the unions with plumbers and bricklayers, control and screen those who come into their fields. If one is interested, or at least reasonably so, physical education has let them in, and out. Instead of the students' saying "no" to us, perhaps in time we should say "no" occasionally to them.

Recommendation 5. We need to provide contemporary continuing education programs for both professionals in the field and for those of us in higher education. Jobs have changed. Rather than just long, extended formal education in advance, our profession requires learning and opportunities to learn on a continuing basis. Thus it would seem wise to space formal education and certification over a lifetime, reducing the amount of time spent on it early in life and spending additional time on formal education later in life.

Recommendation 6. While it may border on hypocrisy, perhaps we should examine the medical and legal education models to see if they could be applied to our discipline. They now have educational programs specifically designed to train individuals to perform tasks that were at one time performed only by physicians

and lawyers. The training of nurses and paralegal personnel has facilitated the performance of the doctor and lawyer and provided no loss in quality of service. The two-year program in recreation is an example and paraprofessionals in the public schools in other disciplines are becoming more common. Perhaps the task performed by six or seven physical educators with bachelor and master degrees could be performed just as well with three or four professional people with the foregoing qualifications and three or four individuals with an associate of arts degree in physical activity or physical education.

Recommendation 7. In our professional preparation programs, more attention needs to be directed to career counseling and placement. We have too long viewed our responsibility as conveyors of knowledge, leaving the task of counseling and placing the student to one person, with little support, minimal released time, and viewed as an adjunct to the educational process. All faculty need to be involved. We need to be as concerned about helping the student get a job as we are about turning in a quality paper. Progressive universities and departments are emphasizing career planning and placement as an integral part of the educational process. To have a placement program, but no career planning program, is inefficient and ineffective. Large amounts of money and manpower are devoted to recruiting and admitting students (getting them and their money, either directly or indirectly), while little is spent on the exit side of the continuum and very little or nothing is devoted to career counseling. A positive, aggressive position will necessitate planning and a commitment of resources, but we need to make this an emerging priority. And,

Recommendation 8. The AAHPER needs to become more of a positive force on a national basis. Millions of dollars are being directed to health, education,

and welfare. Everyone from science to housing has lobbyists working in their behalf in acquiring funds and initiating appropriate legislation. We also need this. We need programming, but it is imperative that we interact with those responsible for funding and legislation. The A.M.A., the American Bar Association, the National Dairy Council, and the National Rifle Association are effective in the lobbying effort--we need to at least consider getting something started in the area. We need a national plan for physical education and leisure.

Summary

In closing, will physical education, weighed down by some pessimism, follow the course of the railroad industry? Both have been great sources of growth and contribution--the railroad industry in the second half of the nineteenth century, and physical education particularly in the last fifty years. The railroad industry, in the face of new competitors arising out of new technologies and new public tastes, but burdened by old mentalities, old practices, old and rigid operating rules, an older and aging labor force, and restrictive government controls, has declined greatly in dynamism and influence; it has become a largely-spent force in terms of additional national growth and impact. The transportation segment of the economy kept on growing, but the railroad industry declined within it.¹⁹ I daresay no one came to this conference via train.

Progress and change in physical education will emanate from its members. It is easy to adopt a specious optimism pervasive in our society and to justify the status quo with pious hopes that soon we will be back to normal, and that our discipline will soon prosper without attention or by occasionally adding a course to the curriculum. Effectively meeting the needs of students

and society will necessitate some changes in professional programs and a re-dedication to professional careers. Such a commitment can be exciting, challenging, and rewarding.

We cannot, however, be provincial in our professional perspectives, conservative in our disciplinary efforts, nor reticent in our professional involvement. We must refrain from seeking relief from someone else and avoid using "lack of time" as a crutch for maintaining the status quo. Involvement, commitment, and sacrifice accommodate growth, generate change, and produce results.

I personally am very optimistic and excited. My optimism and excitement lie in the fact that we control our future; we can determine our direction and growth. Our challenge in physical education lies not in capacity, for we have that, but rather in our unselfish commitment and application. I believe the profession to be in an advantageous position with regard to societal needs, interests, and faculty capability. We must seek to capitalize on our strengths and take an advocate position. We will be only as good, if not great, as our efforts and sacrifices.

REFERENCES

1. Walsh, James, and J. Peter Williams, Jr., "Statewide Reorganization of Education?" Phi Delta Kappan, Volume 58, No. 9, May 1977, p. 693.
2. Ibid.
3. "Can't Read, Sues School System For \$5,000,000," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, March 6, 1977, p. 4J.
4. Ibid.
5. Razor, Jack E., "Future Career Opportunities and Patterns in Health, Physical Education and Recreation," Proceedings 29th Annual Professional Preparation Conference, IAPHPER, February 1976, p. 24.
6. Ibid.
7. Hodgkinson, Harold, "Improving Education and Work Linkage," Training and Development Journal, July 1976, p. 45.
8. Hayes, Alice Bourke, "In the World of Research, The Future Is Now," Chicago Tribune, February 19, 1977, Section 10, p. 1.
9. Clark, David L., "The Real World of the Teacher Educator: A Look to the Near Future," Phi Delta Kappan, Volume 58, No. 9, May 1977, p. 680.
10. Ibid.
11. Gress, James R., "Changing Teacher Education: New Roles and Responsibilities," Phi Delta Kappan, Volume 58, No. 5, January 1977, p. 416.
12. Cushman, M. L., and Frank Steeves, "In Defense of the Comprehensive College of Education," Phi Delta Kappan, Volume 58, No. 9, May 1977, p. 684.
13. Watkins, Beverly T., "Certification of Professionals: A Bonanza for Extension Programs," The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 11, 1977, p. 8.
14. Dressel, Paul L., and Frances H. DeLisle, Undergraduate Curriculum Trends, American Council on Education, Washington DC, 1969, p. 2.
15. Patton, Nan, "Planning for Change," New Dimensions for Educating Youth, Chaffee, John A., Editor, U. S. Dept. of H.E.W., Office of Education, Washington DC, 1976, pp. 65-66.
16. Anderson, Carol, "A Teacher Education Consortium," New Dimensions for Educating Youth, Chaffee, John A., U. S. Dept. of H.E.W., Office of Education, Washington DC, 1976, p. 33.

17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p. 34.
19. Priorities for Action: Final Report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, McGraw-Hill, Hillstown, New Jersey, 1973, p. 7.